

Remarks

The Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's Official Notice taken that the following steps recited in independent claim 1 are "old and well known":

- aligning each of the distributed business departments' business processes and corresponding data requirements to the data structure data sets based on the attributes defined for each data set;
- updating the alignment in response to changes in the business processes and corresponding data requirements of the plurality of business departments as well as changes in the attributes defined for each data set.

The Applicants contend that these are features of the claimed invention that distinguish the claimed combination from prior database management techniques. As explained in the background of the invention section of the pending application, for example, the applicants explained that members of a business continuum each have critical data requirements. Data to satisfy those requirements are often decentralized and inconsistent, despite overlap in data requirements among different participants in the business continuum across an enterprise. This results in unnecessary non-value added activity including the maintenance of diverse data storage formats, protocols, etc. This problem is illustrated in Figure 2, a Venn diagram of non-value-added data activity.

The flow diagram of Figure 3 illustrates a solution to this problem:

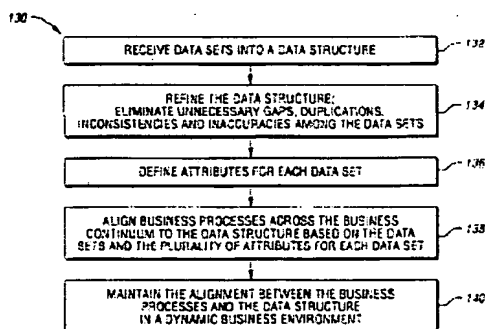


Fig. 3

The "alignment" aspect of the present invention, illustrated in blocks 138 and 140 of Figure 3 above, seeks to efficiently avoid such non-value-added data activity from a

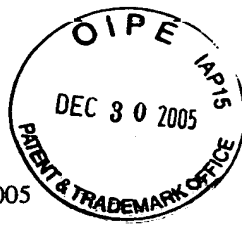
database management perspective. This results in a common data structure across a business continuum at a point in time, as well as across a time span, as illustrated in Figures 9 and 10.

The examiner has submitted a comprehensive listing of prior art relating to database management, including a variety of patents and three database management textbooks. However, the examiner has not shown that any of these references teach the "alignment" aspects of the pending claims. That the "alignment" aspect of the present invention is not taught in the prior art is evidence that the noticed facts are not considered to be common knowledge or well-known in the art.

Further, official notice is only to be taken for facts that are "capable of such instant and unquestionable demonstration as to defy dispute." MPEP 2144.03. Taking official notice of the state of the art is prohibited for "assertions of technical facts in the areas of esoteric technology or specific knowledge of the prior art." MPEP 2144.03.

For the above reasons, the Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection and request allowance of the pending claims.

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CONCLUSION

Applicants have made a genuine effort to respond to the Examiner's objections and rejections in advancing the prosecution of this case. Applicants believe all formal and substantive requirements for patentability have been met and that this case is in condition for allowance, which action is respectfully requested.

No additional fee is believed to be due as the result of the filing of this paper. However, any additional fees or credits should be applied to Deposit Account 06-1510 (Ford Global Technologies, Inc.). A duplicate of this paper is included for that purpose.

Respectfully submitted,

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